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negative evidence to show that with the pacification of the country the reverse process has set in: Jima, once a capital of Nupe kingdom, a huge town to judge from the ruins of its town walls, is reduced to-day to a tiny village; most of its people have moved outside, and the eight former town-wards, still known by their old typical *efu*-names, are to-day scattered outposts, village 'colonies'—*tunga*.

The origin of the *tunga* settlements of Jima represents an unusual development. Normally the *tunga* reflects the expansion rather than the breaking up of the 'mother-town'. But the term *tunga* is not unequivocal. It refers to three different types of settlement. The first, the release of small groups for the foundation of 'daughter-settlements', is a direct consequence of the concentration of a large population in a single town. A growing population in the village, the need of new land, may lead to small groups moving into the uninhabited bush, to occupy virgin land and to found new settlements. A small section of one family at first, a few young men with their wives and children, the *tunga* may grow to a small hamlet embracing two or three large family groups. Or immigrants from another part of the country may choose to settle on the land which belongs to a certain village, and under its political protection: this settlement, too, will then be called *tunga*. Finally, the big landlords of Bida have settled their slaves and dependants on the land all round the capital, in small hamlets, called again *tunga*. But these settlements are in a different category, they represent not colonies of villages or towns but private property, farm settlements of individual landlords. A *tunga* is thus easily identified, for it is always referred to as a *tunga*, a 'colony', *of* a certain village or, in the case of private settlements, *of* a certain landlord. *Tunga* settlements seldom grow beyond three family groups. Should the population expand further, the *tunga* would again release some of its members who would leave the old settlement and found a new colony near-by. But it seems to have happened very rarely that a *tunga* grew into a 'town' proper—Gbangba, a prosperous village north of Bida and to-day the seat of a District Head, is the only example I can quote. Gbangba, however, was not a village colony but a *tunga* founded by people from Bida. On the other hand, I have seen several cases of *tunga* settlements which have grown out of each other, dependencies of dependencies. The *tunga* is itself a much more mobile settlement than the village proper. A *tunga* is often abandoned, and the people move to a new place, if there have been two or three bad harvests, or repeated cases of illness.

We understand the mobility of the *tunga* when we realize that these small farm settlements, founded by younger branches of families, can have none of the spiritual bonds—religious and ancestral—that would tie the 'real' village more permanently to the locality.[1] The same factor

I will not examine here. I may say that I have found two other typical instances; one I have described in *Man*, 1938, 85. There may be many more, of which the traces have become much more obliterated.

[1] An exception is provided by certain cults which are linked with individual families and not with the village as such; a sacred shrine of this kind may thus be carried to a *tunga*. The *tunga* Shebe Woro, for example, harbours the sacred chain and the shrine of Tsoede—two paraphernalia of the *edidi gbeyi* cult.

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which make up the *efu*. The Nupe house consists of a number of huts, mostly round, built of clay and thatched with grass, which are surrounded by a high mud wall. The wall opens upon the path or open space in front of the house in the *katamba*, a hut more spacious than the rest, with big doors which make the *katamba* a gateway or entrance-hall of the compound. Inside the house are smaller partitions and a number of smaller *katamba*, all invisible from outside. You only see the tops of the grass roofs protruding from behind the compound wall. Sometimes the house of a chief is built in a different, more imposing style with a large square or semicircular *katamba* which has a high gabled roof and windows let into the walls. Often huts or entrance-halls are decorated with ornaments worked in relief into the clay. Some houses are more beautifully decorated than others—a sign both of difference in prosperity and in ambition or aesthetic leanings. There are the signs of occupational specialization: one or two blacksmiths' furnaces; a house decorated with crude plastics in relief of animals, or with a pair of horns surmounting the roof—a hunter's place; a platform of dyeing pits in one corner of the village, and perhaps the half-open sheds of the weavers. To-day one small mosque at least is found in every village of Nupe. Pagan sacred shrines or sacrifice places are mostly hidden inside the houses; only in the riverain villages did I find a sacred shrine placed in the open, in the middle of the village. The sacred groves where the annual sacrifices are performed are always some distance away from the village, hidden in the thin bush and brushwood which surround the village. Most villages are situated near a watercourse, be it only a little stream or brook. From here the women fetch the water, and here you may see them at all hours of the day washing dishes and calabashes or laundering their clothes. There are also wells in most of the villages, well-dug deep wells—the Nupe are excellent well-builders—with a strong timber framework and a solid, clean platform round the mouth of the shaft; standing on the platform, the women draw water in buckets or earthenware pots tied to long ropes of native hemp. The big, round roasting-ovens of clay which look like huge red eggs scattered on the outside of the village, and in the bigger places the square of open booths which forms the market, complete the picture of the Nupe village. Once or twice a week this square is overflowing with people, men and women of all ages: they buy and sell, they listen or dance to the music of drummers and flute-players, they have their heads shaved, they talk, chat, cry out their wares. They are a mixed crowd, and the nearer the village is to the main roads of the country, the more mixed it is: people from the village, peasants from the *tunga* near-by, traders from Bida, travellers and occasional visitors from places and countries far away.

The market gathering is not the village community. Yet the boundary of what we have called the area of common life is, of necessity, fluid. It is redrafted and reset with every new bond of contact and every new channel of communication. But we may say this: the village and its dependencies form the core of this area of common life. Between them takes place the intensive life of the community, of regular and habitual co-operation in all spheres of life. Within this area marriages are arranged,

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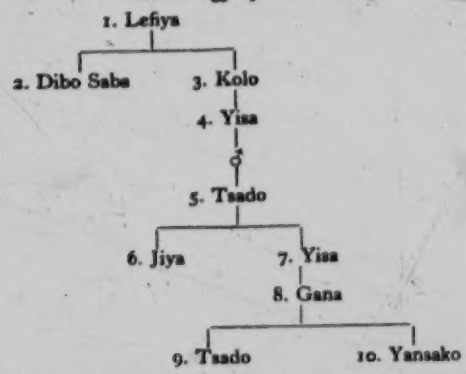
Genealogy of Doko Chiefs



Father of the Town, and who stands somewhat apart from the other village ranks. He plays the part of the chief 'elector' or 'king-maker'; he is never himself a candidate for chieftainship, but is entrusted with the rule of the village during the interregnum. We shall hear more of him presently. The Nupe dislike a long interregnum: as a rule only a few weeks, filled out with discussions and the consultation of diviners, elapse before the appointment of a new chief.[1] This appointment will eventually need the confirmation of the *Etsu* Nupe and, to-day, of the Administrative Officer. This last rule, however, applies only to those chiefs who are recognized as official Village Heads under the modern Native Administration. In the reorganization of the Emirate under British rule only the larger villages have been created seats of official Village Heads. Their number does not comprise all the places which are 'villages' or 'towns' in traditional native conception.[2] A significant terminological dualism has been the result: the people speak of *Žitsu*, 'town-king', when referring to their traditional, officially unrecognized, chief, and call the officially appointed Village Head *Etsu Nyenkpa*, 'Money Chief' (i.e. tax chief).

I can offer no explanation for the coexistence of these two different systems of chieftainship, of hereditary and promotion type. There is no evidence of either having developed from the other. Nor can local conditions, economic factors, or the factors of size and population be made responsible. But I could discover the sociologically interesting correlation between the system of succession and the religious elements which surround Nupe chieftainship. In the villages where chieftainship is hereditary we find that vague mythology of origin which tells of the first occupation of the land, and of the foundation of the village by the

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[1] I have been told that formerly unanimity between the various diviners of the village was considered necessary. In Mokwa my informants stated that the normal duration of the 'interregnum' is ten days.

[2] In connexion with a scheme to raise the salary of Village Heads the number of Village Headships in Bida Emirate has recently been further reduced.

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ancestor of the present chief. A certain special magic and sacred insignia are linked with the house in which chieftainship is vested. Thus the chiefs of various Beni villages and of Sakpe possess the brass bangles of Tsoede; chiefs in Dibo country an iron staff; chiefs in the riverain area the sacred chain of Tsoede. The magic ritual which is associated with chieftainship varies as widely: in Doko it is a harvest rite, the 'eating of the bulrush-millet'; in other villages it appears as magic against barrenness, as a rain sacrifice, an ordeal, or as a general rite to secure health and prosperity of the community. But invariably the chief's ritual, whatever its more specific aim, will be performed as funeral rite and ceremony of installation of chiefs, and also whenever certain great calamities befall the community—a drought, famine, or epidemic. The chief is not himself the priest of this magic, and often has not the insignia in his own possession. Insignia and magic are entrusted to another member of the chief's family. The office of the *Ẓigi*, the village priest, is kept in the junior branch of the chieftain house, and *Ẓitsu* and *Ẓigi*, Town-king and Town-priest, appear in the genealogies as elder and younger brother (in the classificatory sense).[1]

In the communities, on the other hand, where the chief is elected from the senior rank-holders, his house 'owns' no special magic or insignia, and there is no mythology of a founder of the village, but tradition speaks of the village as having 'always been there'. The religious duties fall, instead, to the *nũsa* who acts as chief 'elector' and who is entrusted with the rule of the village during an interregnum. This man's office will be hereditary and sacred, he will own insignia or a special powerful magic, which is, again, invoked at the death and the appointment of chiefs or in the case of great calamities. A supernatural agency, a mystic safeguard, is thus always assumed behind the chief's authority. But Nupe village organization has evolved two different solutions, in accordance with the two different systems of chieftain succession: one makes the chief or his family the agents of the supernatural power which supports the claim to chieftainship; the other separates the political rule from the mystic safeguard and, instead of a hereditary king, brings into being a hereditary 'king-maker'. (See chart II, p. 55).

This division of religious and secular office seems to eliminate effectively conflicts between chief and priest. The priests of the village cults, experts in religious matters only, have no influence in political affairs; they are, as we saw, not even granted the general prerogative of their age: a seat on the council of elders. The priest of the chief's cult, if of the chief's family, is classed as a 'younger brother' and thus equally barred from the position of an influential elder. Only the priest-king-maker (where he exists) could gain the position of a rival power and interfere with secular affairs. However, by his office the main 'elector' of the chief, he should be a supporter and ally of the chief, whose office reflects to some extent his own authority, rather than his adversary or rival. He may prefer a puppet at the head of the village—I saw an instance

[1] See the genealogy given in chart II, p. 55.

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
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and court historians, place his birth in the middle of the fifteenth century.[1] At this time, the tradition runs, there was no kingdom of Nupe, only small chieftainships which, among the Beni, were united in a confederacy under the chief of Nku, a village near the confluence of Niger and Kaduna. At that time the Nupe people were tributary to the *Atta* (king) of the Gara, at Eda (Idah), far down the Niger. The tribute was paid in slaves, and every family head had annually to contribute one male member of his house. These slaves, as tradition has it, were always sister's sons. It so happened that the son of the *Atta* Gara came hunting to Nku in Nupe country. Here he met the daughter of the chief of Nku, a young widow, fell in love with her and lived with her for some time. When the death of his father recalled him to his country, to succeed to the throne of the Gara, this woman was pregnant. He left her a charm and a ring to give to their child when it was born. This child was Tsoede. Then the old chief of Nku died, his son became chief, and when Tsoede was 30 years of age the new chief sent him, as his sister's son, as slave to Eda. The *Atta* Gara recognized his son in the new slave by the charm and ring which he was wearing, and kept him near his person, treating him almost like his legitimate sons. Tsoede stayed for thirty years at his father's court. Once the king fell victim to a mysterious illness which nobody could cure. The court diviner prophesied that only a fruit from a very high oil-palm outside the town, plucked by one man, would cure the king. All his legitimate sons tried, in vain, to obtain the precious fruit. Finally Tsoede made the attempt, and succeeded. But in this attempt he cut his lip so badly that he looked almost like a man born with a split lip. From this time—and this still holds true to-day—all hare-lipped boys born in Nupe are named Edegi. Tsoede's achievement, which made him still more beloved by his father and honoured by the court, evoked the jealousy of his half-brothers. Thus, when the *Atta* felt his death coming he advised his son to flee, and to return to his own country the rule of which he bestowed on him as a parting gift. He assisted him in his flight, he gave him riches of all kinds and bestowed on him various insignia of kingship: a bronze canoe 'as only kings have', manned with twelve Nupe slaves; the bronze *kakati*, the long trumpets which are still the insignia of kings in the whole of Northern Nigeria; state drums hung with brass bells; and the heavy iron chains and fetters which, endowed with strong magic, have become the emblems of the king's judicial power, and are known to-day as *egbā Tsoede*, Chain of Tsoede.[2]

Now comes the story of Tsoede's adventurous flight from Eda, travel-

[1] See Appendix III. There exist several versions of the myth. I am giving here the version which I learned from the *Etsu* of Patigi, the last living descendant of the Tsoede dynasty.

[2] The villages where these chains are found (all lying in the Niger valley) were entrusted with the special mission of acting as the 'King's Hangmen'. I have described this organization in *Man*, 1935, 143. Two places on the Niger, Tada and Jebba Island, possess sacred bronze figures which, like the chains, are linked with the tradition and worship of Tsoede. According to some versions of the Tsoede myth they too were a gift from the *Atta* to the departing Tsoede; the *Etsu* of Patigi, my informant for the version given here, denied this.

2: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1954
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problems of survival which face, not this or that individual, but the collectivity, such as droughts, epidemics, the fertility of the land, and the fertility of the population. The close association of *kuti* with the well-being of the whole community is convincingly expressed in the concluding formula of every ritual, whatever its occasion—*Sokó lá ẹ̀zi u ge*: 'May God grant that the village (or town) prospers.'

Let me make it clear that the efficacy of the ritual lies in the whole of the procedure and not in any of its elements, not even in the language employed on such occasions. Though invocations and prayer-like formulae play their part in ritual, they are not peculiar to it; like the act of *labá* they also occur, in much the same form, in other observances and are by themselves without any power. Significantly, they are often couched in language which is nondescript or takes the form of riddles and parables representing comments upon the ritual rather than crucial stages in the procedure. Also, the language can be varied without affecting the efficacy of the rite; thus I could record songs in one ritual which were borrowed from another, the people's comments being that 'it made no difference'. Nor yet are there material objects, effigies and the like, which might be said to contain the supernatural power. Most rituals have their customary places, and some of the sacred songs speak of the 'initiates entering the house' of the *kuti*; but this is a mere metaphor, for no Nupe ritual has a 'house' or 'temple', or indeed a locality which is on all occasions 'sacred', barred to the uninitiate, or avoided by the people. On occasion, the localities are changed without further ado, for example, when a village grows and encroaches upon the grounds hitherto reserved for the ritual. The cult objects, if they exist at all, are usually things of no sacred association—boughs or leaves carried in the dances, unimportant animals killed in the sacrifice, and pots and dishes used for cooking and eating.

There are exceptions. In a few places I found rituals associated with stones, either ordinary rocks in the ground or (in two instances only) round stone balls supported on carved wooden posts. Sometimes the rituals are even named accordingly, for example, *fitákuŋ*, 'The Stone drinks' (a ceremonial from Doko and Pichi), or *takúŋžiko*, 'Black Stone' (a ritual from Katcha). Other cult objects seem to be of alien origin, such as the masks of the *elo* ritual of Mokwa, which betrays Yoruba influence, and the 'thunderbolts' used in a fertility cult known to come from Gwari. The most elaborate cult objects in Nupe, certain bronze figures in human shape, occur only in the Niger valley, in the two villages Jebba and Tada, and are again said to be of alien origin; they also belong to a very special series of rites, associated with the mythical

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founder of Nupe kingdom and serving the interests of the state. We shall later deal with these 'exceptions'. Let me here stress that in calling them that I am taking my lead from the people. Indeed, the Nupe would altogether disregard these lapses from a wholly abstract creed, which seems to require no effigies or visible symbols; for when comparing their religion with that of other peoples, the Nupe will always emphasize that they have no sacred emblems, idols, masks, or 'little likenesses' (*zazagíži*).

It is perhaps not surprising that so abstract a conception as that of *kuti* should not be held with equal clarity by everyone. In particular, I met with two as it were heterodox notions; one was the idea that *kuti* represents a part of *Sokó*, or a *Sokó tetengi*, a 'Little God' (which, in Nupe language, is a contradiction in terms); according to the other, God was 'up above', but *kuti* was somehow of the earth, being a 'thing' buried in the ground, very likely in the places of ritual. These notions were always put tentatively, and were moreover voiced by individuals who could not claim the fullest knowledge available in the society, that is, by younger men or by Nupe under the influence of Islam; the older men, and especially the priests of *kuti*, declared such views to be false. But supernatural power understood more concretely and associated with specific material objects also has a place in the Nupe universe. This notion is embodied in the third tenet of the religion, which concerns the existence of *cigbe* or 'medicine'.

(iii) *Medicine*

Let me say, first of all, that 'medicine' is the literal translation of the vernacular term, which is applied not only to 'magic' substances but also to medicinal herbs or drugs of any kind, native as well as European, whose properties are assessed essentially empirically. Of the relation between the two we shall speak in a later context. Here we must note that the Nupe inventory of the 'things in the world' does not mention 'medicine', although in some respects it is an exact counterpart to *kuti*, that is, an agency meant to aid man in a universe governed by an all-too-distant deity. But unlike *kuti*, 'medicine' is not thought of as being part of the creation and a primordial gift of God. If it now exists in the world, it does so because of man's own endeavours. There is a legend, well known throughout the country, expounding this view.

'There was a certain younger brother, called Kpara, whose elder brother was Tswasha Malu. They lived in the time of *Etsu* (king) Shagó.[1] There existed a certain medicine, called *cekpyeca shina*

[1] The two brothers are mentioned in no other myth. The name of the king, Shagó, occurs also in the myth describing the origin of the

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1. Sacrifice before twin shrine

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2. The sacred crocodile of Mokwa

[p. 22(A)]

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of Mokwa, true to the fiction of the 'pact', held a formal court, trying the animal for breaking the pact and passing sentence of death.[1] The power of Mokwa over crocodiles is well known all over Nupe country and, today at least, unrivalled. The village of Katcha, on a tributary of the Niger, apparently had a 'sacred crocodile' in the past; but the charm had failed to work and, less faithful to their cult (or less optimistic) than the people of Mokwa, the people of Katcha abandoned the practice.

My second instance comes from Pichi, a small village near Bida, and concerns a spirit said to be embodied in the leopards of that locality. Surprisingly, it is identified with one of the early chiefs of Pichi, many generations back, and known by his name, *Ndakó Yisa*, Grandfather Yisa; but since all Nupe invariably refer to leopards in this circuitous and respectful manner, and since Yisa is an extremely common name, I am inclined to regard this quasi-totemic interpretation as apocryphal. Nor is the belief very positively stated or accompanied by special rituals. The people believe, however, that no leopard will attack a person of Pichi, and in turn refrain from molesting the animal, even if it kills their dogs or goats.

If animals ever played a more momentous role in the Nupe universe, there is little evidence of it today. Some disconnected 'superstitions' and a few suggestions in folklore are the only instances of this kind. Thus the Nupe believe that animals, like men, have 'spirit doubles' (of which more presently) and that certain animals are also possessed of quasi-human or superhuman faculties. The attitude towards leopards is a case in point. Most villagers are convinced that if the respectful, indirect reference to 'Grandfather Yisa' were omitted, the leopards in the neighbourhood would be annoyed by this 'lack of courtesy' and would surely attack the village (though strict observance of the rule would not make them more amenable or friendly); but no attempt is made to explain the belief or to relate it to some other, more fundamental, tenet of the creed. Much the same applies to 'Father Tortoise', *Ndakpa*, who is the hero of numerous tales, in which he plays the part of a would-be clever fellow who runs into various adventures, either amusing or containing a moral. A small red beetle which appears at the beginning of the rains is called *Sokó*, which odd nomenclature elicits only this comment: 'Since the

[1] The people told me afterwards that the crocodile had in fact died; when I pointed out that I had since seen it in the stream, I was assured that it was 'a different one'. The people of Jebba Island, incidentally, claimed that the river ritual *ketsá* similarly protected all riverain people from crocodiles; which claim was ridiculed by the proud owners of the crocodile cult in Mokwa, who at once recalled that three years previously a Kede man from the river had been killed by a crocodile.

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the *ndakó gboyá*. As mentioned before, the practice was abandoned apparently in the early twenties. But it was since revived once, in 1931, at the death of the village chief, when even the *ndakó gboyá* society played its part (in spite of the official ban).

4. RITUAL AND CULTURE CHANGE

This seems an opportune place to consider the impact of changed conditions upon Nupe ritual, at least in its negative, disruptive aspects. The changes undergone by the Jebba rituals do not of course stand alone; in the last generation or two numerous pagan rituals all over Nupe country have been disappearing or have suffered more or less radical modifications. But the conditions in Jebba are in some respects unique and hence capable of illuminating factors and processes obscured elsewhere.

Let me, to begin with, say a few words about one of the abandoned Jebba rituals, the *sokokó*, whose name suggests a ceremonial of uncommon importance. It belonged to the cycle of rites performed in the 9th month; it was concerned with fertility, health, and prosperity in general and centred upon a sacrifice performed on the top of a hill overlooking the river valley. It is said to have been discontinued in 1914, when the residence of the Governor was built on the site of the sacrifice.

Now, similar reasons, similarly fortuitous, are also quoted in connection with certain other changes of ritual practice. In each case, my informants maintained, the disappearance of the *bà žiko*, the 'black' or 'secret place', led to the disappearance of the respective ceremonial or at least to some radical change in the observance. It is true that the place formerly chosen for the esoteric part of the *dzakó*, which used to lie on an uninhabited bank of the river, is today occupied by a riverside camp of Hausa fishermen; the old *gunnu* grove and the place in the bush where the *mamma* masks used to dress in secrecy have similarly lost their former seclusion, being now close to crowded thoroughfares. Yet it is equally true that suitable adjustments could be made: the *dzakó* is still regularly performed, with a programme only slightly changed; the *mamma*, though performed irregularly, has suffered this change for different reasons, and the masked dancers can still dress in secrecy, now in the privacy of an elder's house. Only the observance of the *gunnu* has been altered in a more far-reaching manner. These facts bear out a point made previously, that sacred places and the like are of relatively little importance in Nupe religion. If, then, a ritual is abandoned altogether or radically modified, this must be due to factors other than the loss of the customary locality and seclusion, inconvenient though the loss might be.

the villages drumming is mainly a side-line to farming. Drummers in Bida form small bands or companies, the origins of which, and the type of their performance, vary. Both men and women perform and women sing. Members of a single group may come from different families. There are no *efakó* arrangements. Such a band may be in a *bara* (client) relationship to a nobleman. The various bands or companies do not co-operate. The drums are made by wood-workers on the river.[30]

Western crafts are practised for wages in the workshops of the N.A. Public Works Dept. These craftsmen include blacksmiths, mechanics, carpenters, and bricklayers. Temporary unskilled labour is employed mainly in occasional work demanding a large body of unskilled labour, such as construction work of various kinds. Most of these labourers go home and return to their permanent work at the end of their temporary employment. Those who are farmers seek temporary employment during the dry season only, to supplement the normal source of income.[31]

Women's crafts

Pottery is practised individually. Jebba Island, Baro, Badeggi, and Bida are famous for their pottery and there is a regular trade in both potters' clay and pots. The main products are small water jugs and large water containers. Clay is prepared from swamps at Gbako River, at Badeggi, and sold by the villagers. It is tempered with powdered potsherd or brick. The building of the pots is individual work, but firing is undertaken collectively. Pots are simply fired, then given a brown wash or blackened with a concoction of shea-nut bark.

Shea-butter manufacture is carried out by women, but the roasting ovens are built by men.

Indigo-dyeing is practised only by a few *Konú* groups, where the men are weavers and the women dyers. The indigo-grass and the indigo-tree are cultivated by men, but where the indigo is picked and prepared from wild growing grass, the work is done by women. The dye-pot platforms are made by women; the dyeing is carried out individually. There are a few groups of male dyers (e.g., in Mokwa), who use a rather different technique from that employed by the women.

Women's weaving is done on upright looms 21 ins. broad, which may be of Yoruba origin. Among the Basa-Nge, older women weave patterned raffia. Fishing-nets in Kede are made by old men and women from *rama* fibre.[32]

Weapons and tools include spears, bows and poisoned arrows used by the more remote groups, and knives with blades 8 to 10 ins. long. A few men use flint-locks, and formerly a whole section of the Nupe army was equipped with guns.

Dug-out canoes are used by the Bataci as well as the Kyedye. Those of the latter are large and square with caulked top strakes. They are mostly obtained from Onitsha and the lower Benue.

Musical instruments include a central-hole flute (the blow-hole is midway between the ends of the tube), pipes, clarinets (of Hausa origin), various drums and rattles, long bronze trumpets (forming part of the royal insignia), and, in some areas, bull-roarers and animal horns.

Gabi figures are statues of different origins. Two bronze figures stand unprotected in the centre of the village of Jebba Island near a dilapidated hut which is said to have been formerly a temple. There are seven figures at Tada village which are kept in a round hut and carefully tended; some of these are human figures and some animal and they appear to be of diverse origins, but are regarded traditionally as having been left by Tsoede on his flight up the Niger.[33]

[30] Nadel, op cit., pp. 301–3. For an outline of the *bara* system see below, p. 35.
[31] Nadel, op cit., pp. 304–8.
[32] Nadel, op cit., pp. 235, 293–7; Hopkins, 1934; Notes on Kede District, 1950.
[33] Temple, 1919, pp. 114, 117, 196, 232; Meek, 1925, vol. I. p. 108; Walker, 1934; see also Palmer, 1931.

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LEGAL PROCEDURE

627 The village head has limited and informal judicial powers. Minor cases are settled by him with two or three members of the council and the elders of the ward to which the litigant belongs. The procedure is informal and discussion rarely becomes heated. The authority of these courts is gradually being surrendered to the officially recognized courts. Cases requiring formal justice are referred to the 671 Native Court under the professional Moslem judge (*Alkali*) of the District.

692 In modern Nupe, Moslem law is paramount; the judges (pl. *Alkalai*) reside in Bida and the other Districts. The Bida town court is both a local court and appeal court for the Districts. The *Etsu* and his councillors form a higher court of appeal for cases concerned with land.

671 A marked disparity has been reported between Moslem law and the traditional 182 culture, particularly in rural communities, where the social and economic conditions differ most widely from the social life of which Moslem law is an expression. Peasants who were familiar with and understood the old customary law, often insist, when they come before the courts, on being accompanied by a mallam or person of standing who is familiar with the " new " law.

Among the Kyedye the *Alkali* holds his court in Mureji; the *Kuta* (chief) and delegates (district heads) have no judicial authority.

692 Jurisdiction over grave crimes was formerly the responsibility of the *Etsu* 696 Nupe. The death penalty was exacted for theft in the night, " big theft," murder, and treason. Traditionally the only villages in which executions could be performed were the *ledu* (pl. *leduzhi*) villages—Jebba, Gbere, Tada, Jiragi, Sulati, Fofo, Taiji, and Cewuru, which lie along the banks of the Niger 10 to 15 miles apart, between Jebba in the north and Eggan in the south. The king's hangmen resided here and a criminal was generally taken for execution to the *ledu* village nearest to his home.

778 Each of these villages possesses a " chain of Tsoede," generally kept at the 782 chief's house; it is a typical heavy iron slave or prison chain, up to 30 ft. long, with arm- and leg-irons. Traditional sacrifices of beer and blood are made to it, and it protects the village from sickness and brings fertility to women. Jebba and Tada, the oldest of the *leduzhi*, also possess bronze figures.[37]

INHERITANCE

428 The personal property of men is inherited by their sons, that of women by their daughters. The family farm goes to the relative next in seniority, younger brother or eldest son, in the classificatory sense.[38]

586 A widow may be inherited by her husband's sister's son or her husband's younger brother; custom forbids remarriage with an elder brother. Islam, however, allows remarriage with elder or younger brother.[39]

LAND TENURE

423 Land tenure in different parts of the country has been variously affected by two factors, namely the appropriation as estates held by the nobility of parts of the tribal lands after the Fulani conquest, and the density of population.

The royal house of Bida holds the title to certain lands by right of conquest. Land was also bestowed on others by the royal house for services rendered, and all individual titles to land are held to be ultimately derived from this one source. The clearing and first hoeing of the royal estates is done by large-scale communal labour. The subsequent work was formerly done by slaves, but to-day by paid labour.

Most of the appropriation of land occurred in the area east of the Kaduna River. Here population is more dense and there is a complex system of land ownership and transfer. Owing to the consequent shortage, disputes are frequent and particu-

[37] Nadel, 1942, pp. 56–8, 165–79; 1940a, p. 181; 1935b.
[38] Nadel, 1942, pp. 31–2, 245.
[39] Nadel, 1954a, pp. 249–50.

8: Walker G-5 (ca. 1933) 1934 FF52 Nupe FF52

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M8

SAME AS FIG. 4 IN "MAN," 1931, 201.

FIG. 4. (A). REAR VIEW.

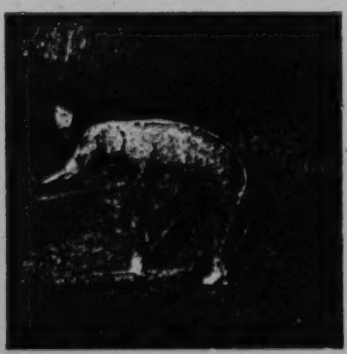

FIG. 15. DARK BRONZE FIGURE OF ELEPHANT

SAME AS FIG. 9 IN "MAN," 1931, 201.

GABI FIGURES FROM JEBBA AND TADA, MIDDLE NIGER

Photographs by Mr. S. W. Walker.

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8: Walker G-5 (ca. 1933) 1934 FF52 Nupe FF52

MAN

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Nigeria. With Plate L. Walker.

Gabi Figures and Edegi, First King of the Nupé. *By S. W. Walker, District Officer, Ilorin Emirate, Nigeria.*

718 532 193 [13]

In MAN, 1931, 201, Sir H. R. Palmer published an account of certain "representations of deities cast in metal . . . in the region round Jebba and Rába on the Middle Niger." I have recently had an opportunity of seeing these figures, and a fuller account of them may be of interest. For ease of reference the same numbers will be used as in Sir H. R. Palmer's article.

2. The two Jebba figures (Plate M 1, 2, 3) are well known and stand almost unprotected in the midst of the village on Jebba island, close by a dilapidated hut, alleged to be consecrated to their worship. The photographs accompanying the above-mentioned article are clear, and no further description is here necessary other than certain observations which a comparison with the other figures evokes.

3. The other photographs (Plate M 4, 5, 6, 7, 8) show four of seven figures at Tada, a small Nupé fishing village on the high bank of a backwater of the Niger, some 25 miles east of Jebba and some five north of Shonga. They are kept in a round hut and, unlike the Jebba figures, are carefully tended. They are taken out and scoured every Friday, and the floor is thickly spread with clean white river sand.

4. The most noticeable figure is one of dark bronze, 3 feet 8 inches high, bearing a general resemblance to the male figure at Jebba, both in technique, decorative treatment and conventional form. Its head dress consists of what appears to be a tight-fitting helmet, from which hang five coils reaching to the waist. To the front and rear of the helmet are attached medallions which bear the device illustrated in fig. 9, consisting of a horned and mustachioed face, surrounded by an interlacing design. Each medallion is surmounted by a crest behind which are models of birds as in fig. 10. The close-fitting gown reaches below the knees and is richly decorated with designs in low relief as in figs. 11 and 12. Round the neck hang a tasselled stole, a necklace and a chain bearing another medallion as in fig. 13. The design on the latter consists of a ramlike head surrounded by three birds which suggest the lesser hornbill.

5. Though the similarity of this figure to the male figure at Jebba is obvious, the differences are interesting. The quilted attire of the Jebba figure, with its dagger in front and quiver slung at the back, indicates a warrior in the act of drawing a bow, while the rich and perhaps magic ornamentation of the Tada figure may conceivably suggest a king, priest or civil official. The helmet of the former, like that of the latter, bears a medallion, but smaller, and decorated with the figure of a long-beaked bird similar to fig. 11. The top of the helmet is covered by what is now a tangled mass of bronze wire or 'shavings,' which, like the coils of the Tada figure, might be thought representations of hair, were it not for the fact that they appear attached to the cap or helmet.

6. Another of the dark bronze figures is of an elephant of somewhat slender body and long legs. It has a ridge along the back and is 2 feet high (Plate L, fig. 15).

7. The two remaining figures of dark bronze (Plate M 5) are of ostriches, 4 feet 4 inches and 3 feet 6 inches high respectively. Each has a curious plate on the back suggestive of a tortoise shell, only flatter.